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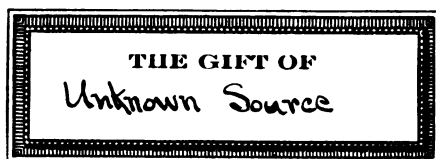
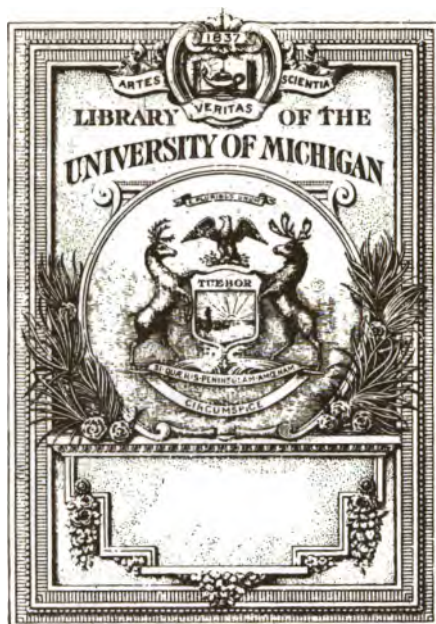
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GERMAN WAR AIMS

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FOURTH AVENUE AND 30TH STREET, NEW YORK

BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS

1917.

PRICE THREEPENCE

GERMAN WAR AIMS

1. Three Kinds of Peace.

THE different schemes of peace-terms which are presented to the world at this moment as possible issues of the war seem to fall under three categories:—

(1) There is the kind of peace which would mean that the Central Powers had come out of the adventure of the war with a balance of loss, that it had ended in an unquestionable defeat for Germany and her Allies:

(2) There is the kind of peace which would mean no *territorial* gain for the Central Powers, a peace “without annexations” which would give back to all belligerents the territory which they possessed in July 1914 or its equivalent, but which would yet make it possible for Germany to say she had gained by the war in other ways—for instance, in the consolidation of her power in Central Europe and in the Near East:

- (3) There is the kind of peace which would bring Germany territorial gain, in the West, or in Russia, or in Africa.

The first kind of peace, the only one which could be satisfactory to us, is still universally treated in Germany as unthinkable. No party or individual is willing in any public utterance or writing to contemplate it.

2. A Status quo Peace.

There are unquestionably numbers of people to-day in Germany who would welcome a peace on the *status quo ante* basis, by which no belligerent Power occupied any territory beyond that of which it stood possessed in July 1914, and, in respect of the material losses incurred during the course of the war, each side (in words attributed to Scheidemann, but repudiated by him) "bore its own burden." It is impossible to say how far this view has spread among the people, because naturally, where it exists, it has had small opportunities of public expression. The Social Democrat "Minority" was until recently the only Party which made it a part of its professed programme. But the more central part of the Social Democrat "Majority," whose mind is expressed by Scheidemann, also declared as early as 1915 for a *status quo* peace. Probably the great mass of the working class is now with them. On the other hand among the educated bourgeoisie—the pastors and professors as well as in the higher ranks of the Army and Navy, there is still

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probably a great body of opinion which clings fiercely to the hope of territorial gain. During the earlier part of July the Centre (Roman Catholic) Party in the Reichstag came over to the "no annexations and no indemnities" formula, and joined with the Radicals and Social Democrat ("Majority") Group to pass the so-called "Peace Resolution," to which the new Chancellor gave a hesitating adherence. A *status quo* peace has now, therefore, the apparent support of a substantial majority of Members of the Reichstag; one has to bear in mind that a certain number of those who voted for the "Peace Resolution" have explained, outside the Reichstag, that when they subscribe to words which seem to exclude annexations, they do not really mean no annexations.

It is obvious that if the German people ultimately come to accept a net loss as inevitable, they will pass to that frame of mind through the intermediate stage of a willingness to accept a *status quo* peace. It is to be expected that if the war continues to go against Germany, offers to conclude a peace on this basis will be made, when the pressure reaches a certain point.

3. The Five Ideas.

Apart from Social Democrat "Minority" circles, there is general agreement that whatever the issue of the war, somehow or somewhere, it must bring Germany a balance of gain. When, however, the question is raised in what direction

this gain is to be secured, there is a notable conflict of views. Five, to some extent rival, ideas govern the German "war aims":—

1. *Sea-Power plus Annexations on the West.*—The annexation of the Belgian coast—and, if possible, a good strip of the adjoining French coast—is represented as an essential condition of Germany's future sea-power. The same group which demands sea-power and the harbours on the North Sea demands also the annexation of the French mining districts (Briey and Longwy). There seems no theoretical reason why the demand for sea-power and the demand for Briey and Longwy should always go together, but so far in Germany the two demands have been found to go together as a single scheme. Possibly in the future a group in Germany may arise, which demands Briey and Longwy without demanding Belgium and sea-power, but up till now the party which lays stress upon sea-power and the party which demands annexations in the West has been identical:

2. *Mittleuropa, i.e.,* the constitution of a Central-European *bloc* of Allied Powers, politically, militarily, and economically associated, under German leadership (in the first instance, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Poland, and Bulgaria):

3. *Berlin-to-Bagdad, i.e.,* German control of the Ottoman Empire:

4. *Colonies, i.e., an African empire, reaching across the Continent from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic:*

5. *New land on the East, i.e., annexations of Russian territory (Courland, Lithuania) for agricultural colonisation by Germans.*

4. Competition between the Ideas.

It may be doubted whether there are many people in Germany to-day who think it possible that all the five ideas will be realised—or at any rate realised as a result of *this* war. There is no one German programme; it is a case of choosing which of the five ideas to pursue and which to let go. Hence we find a variety of programmes according to the combination selected. To some extent even those who hold the same body of ideas, distribute the emphasis differently, and are apt to guard jealously the ideas they especially champion, against the competition of the others. This is true even of the Pan-Germans. In foreign countries, for instance, *Mittleuropa* is commonly spoken of as essentially a "Pan-German" idea. If, however, we use the term Pan-German in the strict sense, for the body of opinion represented by the people called *Alldeutsche*, the *Alldeutsche Verband*, these people continually disparage the *Mittleuropa* idea, as a proffered substitute for the Sea-power idea, which is for them the all-important one. Nor is it only that different groups distribute the emphasis differently; it is that the vicissitudes of the war give now to one, now to another, the chief prominence in public discussion and in the press.

5. The Memorandum of the Six Associations.

During the first seven or eight months of the war, little was said about "war aims." So long as the German people expected to win a sweeping victory, the discussion did not seem called for. It was the protraction of the war which gave urgency to the question what concrete ends the people was fighting to realise. If it could not get everything it might once have wanted, what was to be marked out as the indispensable? Besides this, in the earlier months of the war, the Government had issued a prohibition against the public discussion of war-aims (*Kriegsziele*).

In March 1915, reports were current of approaching peace negotiations, and especially of a separate peace with England, in which concessions were to be made to British demands. Jingo circles in Germany took alarm as to the Government's firmness of purpose. Five of the great economic Associations of the Empire presented to the Imperial Chancellor a memorandum, dated March 10, embodying what they considered the essential objects to be secured by Germany in the war. The five associations were the "Agrarian League" (*Bund der Landwirte*), the "German Farmers' League" (*Deutsche Bauernbund*), the "Central Association of German Industrialists" (*Zentralverband deutscher Industrieller*), the "League of German Industrialists" (*Bund deutscher Industrieller*), and the "Association of the *Petite Bourgeoisie* of the German Empire"

(*Reichsdeutsche Mittelstandverband*). These five associations were soon after joined by a sixth, the "Central Board of the Christian Farmers' Associations" (*Vorort der christlichen Bauernvereine*), and in May the six Associations presented an amended and enlarged form of the memorandum to the Chancellor (dated May 20).

The demands urged in the Memorandum of the Six Associations are of the "Pan-German" type. The mark of the *Alldeutsche*, as distinguished from the champions of *Mitteleuropa*, is that they lay stress upon the *first* of the five ideas—annexation of territory in the West. The Memorandum declares that as the indispensable condition of the security of German sea-power, Belgium must be subjected to German Imperial Law, both in military and in tariff matters, whilst the industrial undertakings and landed property in Belgium must be transferred to German hands. In France the coastal districts must be retained as far as the Somme, the mining districts of Briey, and the fortresses of Longwy, Verdun, and Belfort; in these French districts also "industrial establishments," including large and moderate-sized properties, must be transferred to German hands. This is the typically Pan-German doctrine. With this the Memorandum combines the *fifth* of the five ideas—annexations of Russian territory on the East. It explains that since by the annexations on the West *industrial* Germany will have been notably increased, districts on the East must be taken in order to extend *agricultural*

Germany and so right the balance—"at least parts of the Baltic Provinces and of the lands to the south of them." As to the remaining three of the five ideas, the Memorandum touches perfunctorily on the fourth idea, the Colonies, *i.e.*, it premises, as something which almost goes without saying, that Germany must have a colonial empire adequate to its "many-sided industrial interests," but about the *second* and *third* ideas, *Mitteleuropa* and *Berlin-to-Bagdad*, it says not a word.

6. The Petition of the Professors.

On July 8, another Manifesto of a similar tenour was presented to the Chancellor, the "Petition of the Professors." It was signed by 1,347 persons, representing the following classes:—

University professors and Oberlehrer	-	352
Artists, writers, and booksellers	-	252
Business men	- - - -	182
Schoolmasters and ministers of religion	- - - -	158
Judges and barristers	- - -	148
Higher civil officials (burgomasters, &c.)	- - - -	145
Country landowners	- - -	52
Members of the Reichstag and Parliamentary bodies	- - - -	40
Retired admirals and generals	- -	18

1,347

It is said that many more signatures might have been obtained if the Government had not interposed at a certain moment and forbidden any more canvassing.

In the summer of 1915, after the successive defeats of the Russian armies, when the "Petition of the Professors" was presented, the hopes of the Germans were flying high. The "Petition of the Professors" embraces more than the Memorandum of the Six Associations; it includes the whole gamut of the five ideas. *Sea-power* with annexations of French territory "along the whole western front from Belfort to the coast"—"if possible a portion of the North-French sea-board"—Belgium, of course, and *lands for colonisation taken away from Russia*, are all there, as in the Memorandum; but we have also *Mitteleuropa* ("On the Continent in immediate connection with our frontiers as large a consolidated economic area as possible, which will render us independent of England and the other World-Powers") *Berlin-to-Bagdad* ("our political friendship with Austria-Hungary and Turkey must open the Balkans to us, and we must secure Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, Turkey and Nearer Asia, as far as the Persian Gulf against Russian and English greed; trade relations with our political friends being furthered by all available means"), and the *Colonial Empire* ("Central Africa by itself would furnish us with extensive territory but not with proportionate colonial profit; we therefore need adequate gain elsewhere"). The "Professors'



Petition" also goes circumstantially into the question of indemnities. It admits that the amount of indemnities Germany can get must depend upon the issue of the war—"if we were ever in a position to impose an indemnity upon England, no sum of money could be high enough": on France "however severely she has had already to bleed financially through her own folly and British egoism, a high war-indemnity must be pitilessly imposed"; from Russia an indemnity might well be exacted in kind.

In Radical and Socialist circles the Pan-German propaganda created irritation and alarm, but it continued active. An "Independent Committee for a German Peace" was formed in 1915 under the direction of the historian, Professor Dietrich Schäfer (himself associated with the Pan-German League) to educate the public. In the daily press the Pan-German ideals were put forward by the Conservative and National-Liberal papers, such as the *Kreuzzeitung*, the paper of the Prussian Junkers and higher military circles, by the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, the paper of the big armament firms, by the *Tägliche Rundschau*, the *Hamburger Nachrichten*, the *Deutsche Kurier*, and especially by the Prussian Agrarian paper, the *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, which the fire-eating Count E. Reventlow uses as his rostrum.

A chief exponent of Pan-German views is now also the weekly, *Das grössere Deutschland*,

which till the end of 1915 had been edited by the "Central-Europeans," Rohrbach and Jäckh.

7. The Pan-German Scheme.

If Germany was to become so strong a power on the seas as to put an end to Great Britain's predominance on that element, then it was not only necessary for the German navy to be increased, but also for Germany to possess ports on the North Sea, outside the "wet triangle" (the Bight of Heligoland). At the beginning of the war, when the Germans had hopes of pushing their conquest of the sea-board much further to the west, Calais and Boulogne were among the harbours they had in their mind; latterly, for obvious reasons, we do not hear much of the French harbour-towns in this connection, but the Pan-Germans and other annexationists continue to affirm that Germany must at all events never let Belgium go, since without the Belgian ports they could not have that access to the open sea which is necessary if they are really to "hold England by the throat." They would also need, for the purposes of sea-power, naval stations at different points in the line of maritime traffic, such as Great Britain possesses in Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, &c. Sea-power, presupposing the annexation of Belgium and the French mining districts (Briey), has been during the war for the Pan-Germans the thing of supreme importance. Their hero is

Admiral Tirpitz, whom they would have liked to substitute for Bethmann Hollweg in the Chancellorship. The chief enemy for them is not Russia or France, but England. Their motto is "Forth from the wet triangle!" a saying of the Hamburg shipmaster Ballin.

The increase of German sea-power is euphemistically termed by the Pan-Germans the "freedom of the seas." This term has, of course, a number of different meanings; in Germany itself, it is used in certain circles to mean a modification of international law with regard to the right of capture at sea, but the Pan-Germans state perfectly explicitly that what *they* mean by the "freedom of the seas" is the increase of German sea-power. The seas at present are "unfree" because Germany's activities in the world at large are hampered by British sea-power. To remove this impediment, any paper international law would be utterly nugatory. The only way in which it can be done is for Germany to oppose in solid fact to England's sea-power a sea-power of its own. To say that Germany wants to obtain a *dominion* over the seas, such as Great Britain now claims, is (we are generally told) a slander. Germany need not even aim at having as large a navy as England. What it must do is to diminish the present disparity between Great Britain's sea-power and Germany's to such an extent that it would be a prohibitive danger for Great Britain to thwart Germany in any part of the globe. Then the seas will be "free."

8. The Pan-Germans and the other Ideas.

The attitude of the Pan-Germans to the other of the five ideas—Mitteleuropa, Berlin-to-Bagdad, Colonies—is not one of repudiation, but one of relative disparagement. They are all very well, but are mischievous in so far as they are offered to people as a substitute for sea-power. The Naumann-Rohrbach policy, which found a panacea in *Mitteleuropa*, was inadequate, said Count Reventlow, speaking in April 1916. "Our statesmen must not let themselves be dazzled by the *phantom idea of a Mitteleuropa*, which we might very well create and elaborate, but which cannot take the place of sea-power for us."

"There is still one gross error haunting German heads. We gain, through and with our Allies, the advantages of the Berlin-Bagdad line, and that is considered enough. Let us (the cry is) turn to the South-East; we can then afford to be restricted on the West! We could then exert sufficient pressure out there upon English weak points. It would be a grievous error—a fatal error—to found the Freedom of the Seas upon any group of alliances." (*Kreuz-Zeitung*, January 16, 1916.)

"The enthusiasts for *Mitteleuropa* say: 'We shall secure the same thing if a strong Turkey can put pressure on England's neck, the Suez Canal! Well, there is a good deal of difference in practice between pressure upon the neck (*Genick*) and pressure upon the throat (*Gurgel*).'"

(Karl, Graf von Holstein, in the *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschaftszeitung*, July 21, 1916.)

The position of the Pan-Germans is that, if they acquire the necessary sea-power, all the other desirable things, such as colonies, will be added unto them, whereas if they fail to acquire the necessary sea-power, colonies would be no good to them, would indeed only constitute hostages at Great Britain's mercy. With sea-power, therefore, with the annexations in the West, the whole future of Germany stands or falls. Even the "Professors' Petition" says:—"He who desires to obtain colonies at the price of giving up our security against English sea-tyranny on the coast of the Channel, of giving back Belgium, not only underestimates the value of a sure foundation at home in Europe—a value exceeding that of all colonial possessions—but he also commits the grievous political error of trying to get colonial possessions without security on the sea-ways, possessions dependent, as before, upon England's good or evil will."

9. The Pan-German Campaign.

The publication of the Memorandum of the Six Associations was forbidden in Germany. The German papers of the time seem to refer to it with only a distant allusiveness. The "Petition of the Professors" was circulated as a "strictly confidential manuscript." (It was published in the January of this year in *Das grössere Deutschland*.) Yet the contents of the two documents

became generally known in Germany and were a topic of heated discussion. Friedrich Naumann wrote in July 1915: "Whilst the open discussion of war-aims is forbidden, a dangerous manufacture of war-programmes flourishes in secret. . . . Large economic Associations put forth their views as if the world lay already at Germany's feet."

By August both documents had been published in foreign papers practically in full. Theodor Wolff notes this (*Berliner Tageblatt*, August 16, 1915), and says that "it is impossible to exaggerate the harm done to the German cause."

10. *Mittleuropa* and Berlin-to-Bagdad.

Whilst Pan-German circles were working to rally the German people under the banner of the first of the Five Ideas, concurrently the gospel of *Mittleuropa* and *Berlin-to-Bagdad* was being preached by those who bore the label of "Moderate." If it seems strange that such an epithet should be applied to the exponents of such ambitions, it must be remembered that both *Mittleuropa* and *Berlin-to-Bagdad* could be realised with practically no alteration of the map as it was in July 1914. It was only needful that Germany should unite more closely its allies, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, under its leadership, and the stretch of one organised Power from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf was made a reality.

The idea of *Mittleuropa* had been in the air before the book of Friedrich Naumann appeared

in the middle of October 1915. In May 1915, for instance, the eminent jurist, Franz von Liszt, published a pamphlet projecting for the time after the war a closer union between the Continental States, for which Germany and Austria-Hungary were to be the nucleus, and which was ultimately to include even France, Spain and Portugal. The League was to counterbalance Russia on the one side and the British Empire on the other. Then the eloquent writer, Friedrich Naumann, ex-pastor, Christian-National Socialist, publicist, editor, Member of the Reichstag, constituted himself the chief apostle of the idea. His book *Mittleuropa* (translated into English under the title "Central Europe") written with imagination, colour and fervour, stirred the hearts of many in Germany and attracted the attention of the outside world. It is undoubtedly one of the most notable literary products of the war. One may refer to it as the standard expression of the *Mittleuropa* gospel.

The basis of Naumann's gospel is to some extent sentiment rather than reason—the sentiment of kinship between the Germans of the Empire and the Germans under the Habsburg crown, the sentiment of comradeship begotten by the association of Germany and Austria-Hungary on a hundred battlefields in this war, the sentiment attached to the memory of the Holy Roman Empire and medieval Germany, the imaginative suggestion of the terms "Kaiser" and "Reich"! But it has also a rational theoretical basis. Naumann's fundamental thesis is identical with

that of Seeley's in "The Expansion of England." It is that under the conditions of the coming time, no State will be able to hold its own as a perfectly independent Power unless it has a certain territorial extent, unless its population reaches a certain figure. The day of small States is over. Every small State, even if nominally independent, is destined to be drawn within the orbit of one or other of the World-States. Seeley drew from this the conclusion that the old England was not large enough to hold its own unless it expanded into the British Empire. Naumann draws the conclusion that the German Empire, with its 60 odd millions of people, is not large enough to hold its own against the World-States unless it expands into Central Europe. The existing World-States are the British Empire, Russia and the United States. Germany alone cannot stand on the same footing with them, but the Central-European *bloc*, in which the German race would have the hegemony, would be large enough to do so. "The question shortly," says another writer of this school, "is whether there are going to be three World-States or four?"

So far the considerations determining *Mittel-europa* are those of *Macht* (Power), *i.e.*, are political and military. There is also the economic factor. The pains which have been suffered by Germany in consequence of its oversea exports being cut off have made the idea of Germany's becoming the part of an economically self-subsistent Continental area a very attractive one. It

is anticipated that in the days to come the great World-Powers will all form exclusive economic spheres, protected by tariff walls against foreign competition. Here too, Germany alone could not be self-subsistent, but Central Europe *plus* Bulgaria, *plus* the Ottoman Empire, shut off from the outside world as a single economic sphere, would need no longer, when the resources of South - Eastern Europe and Turkey had been developed by German science and organization, to dread any maritime blockade.

Further, as has been noted, it is contended that this complex of Allied Powers, led by Germany, could always bring effective pressure to bear upon Great Britain through its neighbourhood to the Suez Canal. "We need only wait for the moment when an adequate railway line has been laid across Asia Minor and Syria to the Egyptian frontier, and the English will give up their game of disregarding German interests." (Rohrbach). "The main ganglion of the British Empire is Egypt and the Suez Canal. If Turkey comes out of the war a strong State and provides itself with railways, England can never go on holding Egypt with 6,000 European soldiers. And if England loses the Canal, all the bands connecting its Empire are loosened. Even the Central Government in London might grow insecure, and what then?" (Delbrück.)

11. Rohrbach and the Committee for an Honourable Peace.

Mittleuropa and *Berlin-to-Bagdad* belong together as two parts of a single scheme. Whilst Naumann is the chief exponent of *Mittleuropa*, Paul Rohrbach, known before the war as an active Imperialist writer, is the chief exponent of *Berlin-to-Bagdad*. Up to the end of 1915 Rohrbach was associated with the Pan-Germans on the editorial staff of *Das grössere Deutschland*, but he then split away from them and together with other "Moderates" started a new weekly, *Deutsche Politik*. When some foreign writer spoke of Rohrbach as a Pan-German Imperialist, he accepted the appellation "Imperialist," but denied being a "Pan-German." *Berlin-to-Bagdad* is indeed, as we have seen, the "Moderate" rival to the Pan-German programme of Sea-power. The bitter campaign against Bethmann Hollweg which went on for the two years before his fall, was carried on by the Pan-Germans; the ex-Chancellor had the support of the "Moderates." The Imperialist wing of the Social Democrat Party, whose organ is the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, has been at one with the "Moderates" in enthusiasm for the *Berlin-to-Bagdad* idea. After Bethmann Hollweg had denounced his Pan-German traducers in his Reichstag speech of June 5, 1916, a society was formed by the "Moderates" to carry on a work of enlightenment, by popular

lectures, in support of the Government; it was known as the "German National Committee for the Preparation of an Honourable Peace." Naumann, Rohrbach, and Delbrück, and some "Majority" Socialists (Südekum, Fendrich) were prominent amongst its members. This indicated a withdrawal of the prohibition against the open discussion of war-aims, and enabled the Pan-German "Independent Committee for a German Peace," which had been working for a year, more or less secretly, to come out into the open. Which of the two societies had the largest backing it is hard to know. But it may be conjectured that while the "Moderates" included a number of distinguished Intellectuals, the Pan-German propaganda made a much wider appeal in upper-class and middle-class circles, certainly in the commissioned ranks of the Army and Navy. It is significant that in 1915 the Professors' petition had been able to get 1,347 names, when canvassing was stopped by the Government, whilst Delbrück, who got up a counter-petition of "Moderates," was able to secure only 141 names. We cannot base on this a conclusion as to the state of feeling a year later, when the gospel of *Mittleuropa* and *Berlin-to-Bagdad* had been given much wider popular vogue, yet we may note that, whilst the "Committee for an Honourable Peace" sank out of public notice within a few weeks of its inception, the "Committee for a German Peace" continues active till to-day.

12. Contradictions between Pan-German Theory and the *Mitteleuropa* Gospel.

There are certain salient contrasts between the Pan-German and the *Mitteleuropa* doctrine. For the Pan-Germans, who face towards the West, the chief enemy, as has been said, is England. For the school of Rohrbach, which looks towards the South-East, the chief enemy is Russia. The irreconcilable enmity of Germany and Russia was based by Rohrbach, before the Russian Revolution, on the clashing interests of the two peoples with regard to the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. It was an absolute necessity for Russia, if it was ever to be a great Power, so Rohrbach taught, to possess Constantinople and the Straits; it was an equally vital necessity for Germany to keep Russia away from them. There was no possible accommodation; it was simply a question of German strength butting against Russian strength. Since the Revolution, although the Provisional Government has apparently renounced any exclusive claims to Constantinople, Rohrbach has not let his Russophobia go. He has kept up a steady sceptical criticism of the optimistic views as to the future Russia which the Russian Revolution spread through Germany. The Russian danger has not really been removed.

Again the Pan-Germans continually assert, with all possible emphasis, that a peace on the *status quo* basis, a "Scheidemann peace," would

mean an utter defeat for Germany and a triumph for England. The Rohrbach school maintains that a peace on the *status quo* basis (although something more is to be hoped for) would mean a complete defeat for England; Germany would have secured everything that was vital. For England everything turns upon whether she can break the alliance between Central Europe and Turkey. "England's poor prospects will not be substantially changed, even if the war (instead of ending in a German victory) has what, according to English ideas, would be an 'inconclusive' end." "If at the conclusion of peace, England has failed to achieve all this [the disruption of Turkey and the limitation of Germany's submarine activity] then, according to her own confession, she will have lost the war."

It is sometimes explained that if Germany contrives to come out of this war with *Mittel-europa* a reality, and the connection with an intact Ottoman Empire unbroken, Germany will have got the necessary basis for further expansion later on. The solid stretch of power from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf is not to be regarded as something finally 'adequate, but as a secure *foundation*. No blockade will be formidable; no assault of outside enemies will imperil Germany any more; no one will be able to hinder her while she organises herself for the next advance.

We may notice an extension of the *Mittel-europa* idea which has come up in certain quarters;

for instance, in the *Vossische Zeitung* and the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*. This consists in dropping the *Mittel*; it is not only *Central* Europe which is now seen in visions of the future consolidated against the outside world, but Continental Europe as a whole. In these quarters, there is hope that even France may be won; France may be brought to 'see that her true interests lie in her joining the European *bloc* and not in alliance with the Island Kingdom. The Imperialist Socialists who collaborate in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (Schippel, Jansson, Kranold, Müller, Quessel) were always (in striking contrast to most enthusiasts for *Mitteleuropa*) notably friendly to Russia, even when Russia was the old Empire of the Tsars. They forecast a time when the whole of Central and Western Europe will be a solid aggregate of Powers, in friendly understanding with Russia, united against the British Empire of the Seas.

The entrance of the United States into the war has given a new significance to the idea of Continental consolidation; the antithesis of the future becomes that of Continental Europe to the "Anglo-Saxons."

13. The Colonial Empire.

We come to the fourth idea, that of an oversea Colonial Empire. It does not appear that those in Germany to-day, who put oversea colonies in the first place, are numerous. For the Pan-Germans, as was said, colonies go without saying,

when once Germany has the necessary sea-power. For the *Mittleuropa* school colonies are an adjunct and extension of Berlin-to-Bagdad. There is, of course, a group of colonial enthusiasts, represented by the *Kolonialgesellschaft*, whose interest is mainly centred on the fourth of the five Ideas. Occasionally, one still meets with utterances to the effect that Germany must get back all her island colonies in the Pacific. And this has apparently been recently affirmed by the Colonial Secretary, Solf. But it does not seem to be the general view. The colonies in the South Seas have almost universally been given up as lost for good. And no one in Germany, probably, dreams of getting back Kiao-chao. On the other hand, there is a widely-expressed anticipation of getting a much larger African empire than was possessed by Germany before the war. It is a common thought that Germany made a mistake in the past in acquiring colonies haphazard all over the world instead of aiming at one large continuous dominion. In Africa there is room for such a dominion. Germany will have, of course, to get back East Africa and the Cameroons, and must have the Congo State as well, and the other territories which lie between them, so that one unbroken tract of German power will extend over the whole central part of the African continent.

It is rather the "Moderates" than the Pan-Germans who expatiate upon this future African Empire. Delbrück talks about the "German India" in Africa, and Rohrbach gives it a place

in his propaganda second only to Berlin-to-Bagdad. If indeed the English could ever be got out of Egypt and that country made once more a part of the Ottoman Empire, the territories belonging to the Central-European *bloc* would be actually in land-contact with the German African Empire and the necessity of sea-power, upon which the Pan-Germans insist, would be proportionately diminished. A "German India" in Africa belongs, one may note, to the same order of conceptions as *Mitteleuropa*; in both cases, what the "Moderates" have in their mind is a definite tract of continental territory within which Germany commands, whereas the Pan-Germans want to see Germany, in virtue of its sea-power, carrying through its will all over the globe. "Our field is the world"—also a saying of Ballin's—is a phrase they habitually play off against the ideals of limited continental dominion characteristic of the "Moderates."

The reasons for which a colonial empire is declared to be essential to Germany are commonly given as—

- (1) The increase of power ; and
- (2) Economic necessity.

The reason sometimes given in very ill-informed circles in England, viz. : that Germany needs territory outside Europe for her surplus population, is not commonly adduced in Germany, except occasionally by a chauvinistic minister of religion or some one whose view of the world is more

emotional and imaginative than drawn from the knowledge of facts. In Germany it is generally realised: (1) that Germany has ceased for some 25 years to have any considerable surplus population, (2) that the startling fall in the German birth-rate makes it doubtful whether Germany will have in the near future any considerable surplus population, (3) that, even if Germany had any surplus population, it is questionable whether a white race could settle and thrive in any part of Central Africa.

But it is urged that the possession of Central Africa would be a substantial increase of German power. The German Colonial Empire of the future, we are told, is not going to be left as defenceless as the German colonies have been in this war. They will be abundantly provided with munitions and their black man-power turned to account under German organisation. "The black garrison-troops in the Cameroons and in German East Africa have given such excellent account of themselves under the leadership of German officers that one may affirm confidently: If Central Africa becomes German and our former colonies are given back to us, German Central Africa, adequately supplied with munitions, could hold out for the longest war. The larger this German colonial empire is, the more troops will it be able to furnish, the more risky will an attack upon it be for our enemies, and the more enemy troops will our garrison-troops keep engaged in Africa in the event of war." (Franz Kolbe in *Deutsche Politik* for

December 22, 1916. It is to be noted, however, that the German Colonial Secretary, Dr. Solf, in his speech of June 1917, expressed his readiness to adhere to the demand of General Smuts, that the formation of black armies should be prohibited.) It has been pointed out that according to the Berlin-to-Bagdad scheme, Germany would have it in her hand to cut Great Britain's communications with the East by the Suez Canal. Some writers have pointed out that if Germany possessed ports on the West Coast of Africa she could also make Britain's alternative route to the East by way of the Cape insecure. Central Africa, in fact, stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic, would, in the event of war, form a basis from which the bands of the British Empire could be altogether broken up. Hence the accession of power which its African Empire would bring to Germany would be far from negligible.

In the propaganda for the Colonial Idea in Germany the chief prominence, especially when Social Democrat circles are appealed to, is given to the economic consideration. It is shown how German industries depend upon certain raw materials imported from the tropics, rubber, &c. If the Central European *bloc* is to be self-sufficing, it must, therefore, have an extension in the tropics. With an African adjunct, everything Germany needed for its economic welfare would be produced in territory within the German sphere of power. It is, as has just been said, represented as likely that ere long all the great World-States

will be enclosed by tariff walls. A good deal is made of the resolutions of the Paris Conference in this connection. If *Mitteleuropa* is to hold its own in such a world, a tropical empire is a necessity for it.

14. Annexations in the East.

There is lastly the fifth Idea—Annexations in the East at the expense of Russia. This, as was stated, was combined with the first Idea in the Pan-German semi-secret memoranda of the summer of 1915. But the demand for annexations in the East is not characteristically Pan-German. Hans Delbrück, one of the most emphatic opponents of annexations in the West, who, in April 1915, wrote regretfully in his "Bismarcks Erbe," that there was no longer any empty land left in Europe for the best sort of colonies—peasant colonies—admitted that he had changed his view after the German advance into Russia. He wrote in the *Preussische Jahrbücher* in November 1915 that Germany could no more think of giving back Mitau and Riga (the second of which the Germans had not at that time taken), than she could Strasburg. Even Scheidemann was understood before the Russian Revolution to be not averse from annexations in the East (he is now against all annexations). It is contended that to extend the territory of the Empire over the Russian Baltic provinces is a real expansion of Germany, an expansion of the German people

as well as of German dominion, of the sound peasant stock upon which the whole fabric of the Empire reposes. With a broadening of the foundation, there is the possibility of a more imposing superstructure, of a greater German world-power. (A proposal sometimes made in Germany, by Delbrück for one, is to colonize the Baltic provinces by inducing the numerous German colonists now settled in the farther parts of Russia to migrate to these regions.)

15. Opposition of "Minority" Socialists to all Five Ideas.

Such are the five Ideas, one or more of which we see in all the German programmes which look for some gain as the result of the war. To all of them the Social Democrat "Minority" are opposed, because they see in them all nothing but Capitalist Imperialism. If the annexation of any territory beyond that possessed by Germany in July 1914 is ruled out—and it is expressly ruled out by the "Minority," and now by the Scheidemann section too—then the first and the last of the five Ideas at once fall to the ground. These Socialists contend that any annexation of fresh territory would make the war a war of conquest instead of a war of defence, and, if so, no further argument is needed against either the annexation of Belgium or the annexation of Courland.

But adverse criticism of the five Ideas has not come only from Socialists. There is, as has been

pointed out, a certain rivalry between the Ideas, and adverse criticism of one of them often comes from the eager champions of another.

16. Criticism of Pan-German Scheme.

To begin with the first Idea, the Pan-German Idea of annexations in the West. This is adversely criticised by Delbrück, who stands both for the African Empire and for annexations in the East. In the *Preussische Jahrbücher* for February 1917, Delbrück takes hold of the favourite Pan-German formula for the annexation of Belgium—that it must continue attached to the German Empire “in a political, an economic and a military sense.” Political? Even if Belgium were prohibited from having formally accredited representatives of its own, Germany would be unable to prevent Belgium carrying on by hidden ways an independent policy. Economic? A *Zollverein*, so far from producing a union of hearts, would, according to all experience, lead to friction and hostility. Military? Even if the Belgian army were trained by German generals, Germany would have no guarantee that the Belgians would not turn against her, when it came to a war. If there were a Belgian army, isolated German garrisons would be at its mercy; nor would it be feasible to keep the whole Belgian army in Germany. Belgium in the permanent occupation of German troops would mean permanent martial law—an inconceivable

thing. No, the only way of really attaching Belgium to Germany would be to incorporate Belgium altogether in the German Empire and embody the Belgian troops in the German Army. But that no one surely in Germany can desire.

And as to the possession of Belgium being necessary for purposes of sea-power, Delbrück says that he knows a good number of naval officers who do not believe that the Flemish coast has any very essential value from the point of view of naval strategy. "That increase of power which we must seek, and which will make us secure, we must exert ourselves to win *in the East alone.*"

In a more recent number of the same periodical (June 1917) Delbrück writes: "Supposing that either by victories on land or by the submarine war, we so far brought England down that, in spite of the help of America, she gave up further fighting and was willing to concede us a direct or indirect dominion over Belgium, even so we ought to say: 'Not Belgium, but Africa; not the coal-fields of Charleroi, but Nigeria; not Zeebrugge, but the Azores, Madeira, and the Cape Verde Islands; not Antwerp, but Lagos, Zanzibar, and Uganda, and Gibraltar for Spain.' Is it true that we should get no enjoyment out of a colonial empire, that we should be only in the position of 'precarious tenants' unless we permanently kept England intimidated by our possession of the Flemish coast? There

can be no more baseless superstition! Even suppose the U-boats failed to end England's sea-hegemony for good in this war, even suppose England remained permanently our superior on sea—even so, that Central-African Germany would be strong enough in itself to repel every attack from outside. Has not our East Africa, as it is, maintained itself for nearly three years with nothing but its own diminutive forces? But we should so equip our African empire with weapons and munition factories and depôts that it would be able to hold its own against a world of enemies. By means of our mercantile U-boats, it would even then remain in communication with the home country, supposing the English were once more complete masters of the open seas. A certain number of war U-boats stationed there would even defend the islands and their harbours against English men-of-war But ought we, perhaps, to aim at getting *both*—the Colonial empire, and the dominion over Belgium? That would be to fall into the error of Napoleon I. He, too, aimed at acquiring a great colonial empire for France. But, because he simultaneously extended the French frontiers in Europe, he in the end lost both."

A similar line was taken by the Colonial Minister, Solf, in those lectures of his in the summer of 1916, which brought upon his head the wrath of Reventlow.

"Even should we fail both to win control of the seas and to get the principle of a *mare liberum*

established, even so, whatever the sceptics may say, no sentence of death would have been passed upon our colonial policy. And this is by no means to preach a colonial policy 'by England's favour.' It is not Germany alone which possesses oversea colonies. Other nations do so too, and are not troubled about England's dominion over the seas. Neither the United States of America nor France nor Italy nor Holland nor Japan have ever thought of giving up their colonies because their respective fleets are not strong enough by themselves to command the seas. Moreover, England's sea supremacy is not an indefeasible prerogative; at the present moment, it is shared with the combined French, Russian, and Japanese fleets. We ought to be able to make some day as strong a coalition against England as she has now made against us." (Solf, as reported in the *Weser Zeitung*, June 1916.)

17. Criticism of *Mittleuropa*.

The second Idea, *Mittleuropa*, does not come under the Social Democrat condemnation of annexations, but it is condemned by the "Minority" because they are opposed to the idea of mutually exclusive economic areas. They still are faithful to the principle of Free Trade, and also consider such protective systems incompatible with international friendship. But *Mittleuropa* is also regarded suspiciously from the opposite, Pan-German, quarter. The Pan-Germans dislike

Naumann's gospel for two main reasons : (1) More than any other party, they represent " Nationalism " in the sense that word has to-day in Germany, i.e., narrow jealousy for the predominance of the German race and the unadulterated German tradition. Naumann has taught that, for the constitution of the Central-European *bloc*, the German must be prepared to fuse more or less with other Central-European peoples, to develop a Central-European, as distinguished from an exclusively German, consciousness, to adapt himself to the sensibilities of Bulgarians and Turks. This idea of the German type being blurred in a nondescript Central-European type is hateful to the Pan-Germans. (2) According to the gospel of *Mittleuropa* the Central-European *bloc* is to be strong as a group of *allied* States, whereas the Pan-Germans hold that it is a wrong line to seek to build German greatness on any system of alliances. Germany must be strong in its own strength.

Further, the *economic* side of *Mittleuropa* has been looked at with disfavour in some of the high business circles in Germany. The remarkable series of articles which appeared in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* in May 1916 expressed the views of such circles. Germany, it was insisted, could not sacrifice her world-market to an Austro-Hungarian system of preferences. Herr von Gwinner, the chief director of the Deutsche Bank, also showed himself cold to these projects. The German specialists in economic theory did not give them

much encouragement. Several of those who contributed to the composite book edited by Professor Herkner (*Die wirtschaftliche Annäherung zwischen dem deutschen Reich und seinen Verbündeten*), the most important study of the subject which has appeared in Germany, arrived at conclusions similar to those of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* articles. All this economic criticism of *Mittleuropa* in "bourgeois" circles is taken up and enforced by the Social Democrat "Minority." "The real motive behind the *Mittleuropa* movement," writes a Socialist economist, "is, as Rohrbach frankly admits, not economic, but military and imperialist. Manufacturing states do indeed strive toward association with agricultural states, but for two manufacturing states, like Germany and Austria, to form a Customs Union, would be economically monstrous." ("Spectator" in *Die Neue Zeit*, May 19, 1916.)

18. Criticism of Berlin-to-Bagdad.

The third Idea, *Berlin-to-Bagdad*, i.e., the German control of the Ottoman Empire, is disparaged, as has been seen, by the Pan-Germans in so far as it is offered as a substitute for sea-power. Pressure on the neck of the British Empire is not equivalent to pressure upon England's throat. Utterances from such circles are also apt to speak of the Turks with cavalier depreciation, which Rohrbach or Naumann would

carefully avoid. "A good deal also depends upon who exercises the pressure. With all respect for the military achievements of Turkey in this war, no one can deny that there is a mighty difference between the German empire and Turkey." (Karl, Graf von Holstein.)

We also find the idea disparaged by an enthusiast for the African empire, like Emil Zimmermann. He is anxious to show that the German expectation of what Turkey could furnish economically has been pitched much too high. Hence, he argues, for the supply of what Germany needs, an African empire is indispensable.

19. Criticism of the Colonial Idea.

The fourth Idea, *Colonies* in the tropics, is adversely criticised by the Social Democrat "Minority." So far as it is the increase of power upon which the necessity of colonies is based, these Socialists see in them only a form of the Imperialism against which they fight. So far as it is the need of German industries for raw materials, they contend that it matters little whether the things which Germany needs are produced in territories politically annexed to Germany or not. Whether, in the event of war, a country can be cut off from its sources of supply depends, not on whether those sources were within the sphere of its sovereignty before the war, but on whether they are accessible or not to the enemy. France, for instance, is now cut off from

the mining districts of Lorraine. Similarly, if an enemy cut the lines of communication between Germany and Africa, Germany's African empire would be able to furnish it nothing. Stress is also laid upon the statistics which show the growth of German trade before the war in countries under the British flag. In Egypt, since the British assumed political control, the percentage of British imports and exports, among the total imports and exports into and from that country, had actually continuously diminished, whilst the percentage of German imports and exports had continually grown. Behind the demand for colonies, writers of this school say, is no real economic need, but a mere childish craving for prestige. "If the others have colonies, Germany must have them too."

Outside Socialist "Minority" circles, however, no one dares to indicate publicly that a peace could be contemplated, which did not give back Germany its former colonies, or their equivalent. On the other hand, one may question whether there is much spontaneous enthusiasm for the colonies among the people as a whole. The colonial group is eager and vocal, but according to one of the editors of the *Berliner Tageblatt* in an article he contributed to a book recently published "it would appear that during the war the idea of a colonial activity on the part of Germany has not gained many adherents. At home one may now often hear the words: 'What is the good of colonies to Germany when

they can so easily be taken away in war?'" He goes on to say that soldiers write home from the front, that they are well enough able to defend the home-country, but that oversea dominions are merely hostages given to the enemy. "These ideas are becoming increasingly general."

20. Annexations in the East become a Delicate Subject.

Lastly, the fifth Idea of annexations in the East has, of course, been very much affected by the Russian revolution. Scheidemann and his following now definitely exclude such annexations from their scheme of peace. So long as there is any hope of detaching Russia from the Allied cause, it is obvious that the idea of annexing Russian territories requires delicate handling. The scheme of the great Continental Alliance against the Anglo-Saxons depends for its realization upon Germany's avoiding any permanent ground of enmity with Russia. We find, therefore, that the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, for instance, are always preaching that Germany must give no encouragement to separatist movements within the Russian Empire, such as that of the Ukrainians. The anti-Russian school, on the other hand (Rohrbach, &c.), continue to preach that the salvation of Germany is to be found precisely in encouraging these movements, in promoting the break-up of Russia and helping to establish new separate states (Polish, Ukrainian, Georgian) dependent upon

German support against Russia, and therefore under German influence.

21. The Policy of the Government.

With these five Ideas in various combinations occupying the public mind, what has been the line of the Government? It is plain that the Pan-German view is widely diffused in high military and court circles, but the policy of the Government itself seems to have been all through opportunist. It wanted to get out of the war as much as was possible, but it had a fuller knowledge of the actual conditions than the Pan-Germans, and knew how limited the possibilities might be. The object, therefore, of the Government was to avoid pledging itself prematurely to any of the rival views, to keep a free hand to act, according as events might ultimately fall out. When Bethmann Hollweg was pressed by the Pan-Germans to say definitely that the Government meant to keep Belgium, and by the Social Democrats to say definitely that the Government did *not* mean to keep Belgium, he persistently used ambiguous phrases which might mean either. Similarly, the Government has never pledged itself to adopt the gospel of *Mitteleuropa*, although the Committee for an Honourable Peace, which was predominantly composed of believers in *Mitteleuropa*, was started under a sort of informal Government patronage. The two Central Empires have also now entered into negotiations with regard to their economic relations after the

war, but this does not as yet bind the German Government to anything definite, and it is indeed difficult to see how any stable arrangement can be made when Germany's economic position is so uncertain, and when Austria and Hungary have been unable to arrive at a fresh *Ausgleich* between themselves.

A great change was brought about by the military events in the year 1916, viz., the failure of the Germans at Verdun and the joint offensive on the Somme. The result of this is seen in the German proposals for peace negotiations. These were determined on at the end of October, *i.e.*, at the time when it became apparent that they would no longer be able to hold their original line. The object, therefore, clearly was to start negotiations at the time when the enemy territory occupied by Germany (including Rumania) was at the greatest extent, and before retreat of any kind had begun. No indication was given as to the terms which the Germans would propose except that (1) they would be based on the German military success, and (2) that they would be very reasonable. We might, perhaps, assume that they would have offered in return for the restoration of the German Colonies to vacate France and probably to restore the kingdom of the Belgians, subject to Belgium coming into a permanent alliance with Germany. The establishment of a Kingdom of Poland under German or Austrian protection would certainly have been included, and also considerable extension of Bulgaria. Whatever the details may have been,

the object would certainly have been, though perhaps under a conciliatory form, to secure the complete political, military, and commercial supremacy of Germany on the Continent.

22. The Present Situation.

Since that time, the continued pressure, both military and economic, has still further changed the situation. The question is now in fact not—What are the war-aims which Germany will impose before she grants peace? but What terms would she herself be willing to accept? There is no doubt that the Government are anxious at the earliest moment to get out of the war on any terms which will secure them against revolution at home and national collapse.

The Paris Conference, followed by the entry of the United States and many of the South American Republics, has put economic matters into the foreground. The German Government must obviously view with extreme apprehension the situation at home in the months immediately succeeding the declaration of peace. The physical exhaustion of the people and of the country, combined with the want of food, which cannot be immediately remedied, and the want of raw materials for starting manufactures will create a most serious situation. If, when the troops come back from the front, it is not possible immediately to start again the industrial life of the country, and provide them with food and work, there will

almost inevitably be a very dangerous revolutionary movement; this will be started by the extremer Socialists, but if Germany comes out of the war without a definite increase of strength and prestige in some form or another, the influence of the Government in the middle classes will be so much weakened that it will be impossible any longer to depend on their active support against a revolutionary movement. The Prussian military and agrarian party remains as firm and uncompromising, in domestic as in foreign affairs, as ever, and many of them will undoubtedly prefer civil war to any surrender which would deprive them of the political power which they regard as their right.

For this reason, that which the Government probably most regards is security that, as soon as the war is over, there should be a free flow of food and raw materials into the country, and at the same time, free markets for German produce. But in this connection it has now become apparent that all which is included under the formula *Mittel-europa*, even in its greatest extension, *i.e.*, commercial control over South-Eastern Europe and Western Asia, will not be sufficient; there must be free and favourable commercial intercourse with the rest of the world, and especially an adequate supply of tropical products from Central Africa, wool and cotton from America and Australia. Emil Zimmermann, one may note, is preaching that Germany, in addition to a big African empire, must get a firm economic hold upon South America

and direct German emigration in the future to that quarter. (*Das grössere Deutschland*, October 13, 1917.)

It is useful to the Government that the extravagant demands of the Pan-Germans should still make themselves heard, in view of future bargaining; the higher that anticipation is screwed up in enemy countries of what Germany desires, the wider margin will the German Government eventually have for making proposals which have the air of concessions; on the other hand, the declaration of the Reichstag majority against annexations is useful, in so far as it conciliates Socialist and Radical opinion in the enemy countries, and enables persons of pacifist leanings in those countries to argue for concessions to Germany on the ground that Germany's demands are really quite moderate.

If they are to-day by comparison moderate, that is only due to the increasing pressure of the Allies' power, and they will not grow more moderate, except by the continued pressure of that power. A large mass of the German people may have been compelled to reduce their war-aims to the point at which they are willing to restore the territorial conquests made in this war, but they are not yet willing to see the old wrongs righted, which made the peace of the world unstable before this war—the rule of Germans over Alsatians and Poles, the rule of Austrians over Czechs and Italians and Southern Slavs, the abominable rule of Turks

over Armenians and Arabs and Syrians. Germany is not yet willing to face an issue to the war by which it will have manifestly lost by its adventure. Now unless it is obliged to do so, the rulers of Germany can boast that they have repelled the mightiest coalition the world has ever seen, and in greater security than before begin again to consolidate and organize a domineering power in the centre of the European Continent. It is just amongst those who to-day in Germany are called "Moderate" that the motto—an express allusion to such hopes for the future—is current: "If Germany is not defeated in this war, she will have won."

A Socialist, Dr. Paul Lensch, an ardent supporter of the Reichstag "peace resolution" and of the democratization of Germany, discloses the real ideas connected with a "peace by understanding" in the mind of its German advocates. He writes in the Socialist weekly, *Die Glocke* (October 6, 1917):—

"The consequences which such a peace would have for the English world-power we have often explained. It would be for Great Britain the greatest defeat in its history and the beginning of its ruin. Just because people in England are well aware of that, they are resolute for war and will hear nothing of a peace by understanding. For that very reason, on the other hand, the Central Powers will and can press all the more persistently for such a peace. The new [Pan-German] Fatherland Party, which strives for a peace based on annexations and conquests, is